

Message Text

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ORIGIN PA-02

INFO OCT-01 SS-15 PRS-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /019 R

DRAFTED BY PA/M:REBUTLER:REB
APPROVED BY PA/M:CWFREEMAN,JR.
S/S-O:LMACFARLANE
DESIRED DISTRIBUTION
PA, S/S, S/PRS

-----162047Z 025292 /44

O 161843Z MAY 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE

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FOR CARTER--SECRETARY'S PARTY--FROM PA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT BERNARD GWERTZMAN BY-LINER FRONT
PAGE NEW YORK TIMES MAY 16 HEADED "U.S. OFFICIALS HOPE-
FUL ON MIDEAST, BUT THEIR OPTIMISM IS GUARDED."

2. THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, AFTER THREE MONTHS OF
EXPLORING THE PROSPECTS FOR A MIDDLE EAST PEACE SETTLE-
MENT, HAS DETECTED ENOUGH FAVORABLE SIGNS TO KEEP THE
DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS ALIVE BUT NOT ENOUGH TO WARRANT MUCH
OPTIMISM YET THAT A SOLUTION TO THE ARAB-ISRAELI DIS-
PUTE CAN BE EASILY ACHIEVED.

3. TOP ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS SAID IN INTERVIEWS
LAST WEEK THAT THE MAIN QUESTION SOON TO FACE THE WHITE
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HOUSE AND STATE DEPARTMENT WOULD BE WHETHER THE LARGELY
INTANGIBLE "ATMOSPHERIC" INDICATORS ACHIEVED SO FAR
WOULD WARRANT PROCEEDING FURTHER WITH PLANS FOR CON-
VENING A GENEVA CONFERENCE ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND A
FULL-SCALE AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE DRAFTING OF A
PEACE ACCORD.

4. ON FRIDAY, THE PROMINENT BEIRUT DAILY NEWSPAPER

AN NAHAR PUBLISHED WHAT IT SAID WAS A 13-POINT CARTER PEACE PLAN, AND TODAY ITS INTERNATIONAL EDITION IN PARIS LISTED AMERICAN "IDEAS" FOR A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. THESE, THE NEWSPAPER SAID, CALLED FOR ISRAEL TO WITHDRAW GRADUALLY FROM TERRITORY CAPTURED IN 1967, WHILE THE ARABS WOULD PLEDGE TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL AND TO RENOUNCE THE USE OF FORCE AS A WAY OF SOLVING THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT. AS FAR AS COULD BE DETERMINED, THE NEWSPAPER WAS REPEATING IN ESSENCE WHAT MR. CARTER HAS ALREADY SAID IN PUBLIC.

5. IN COMING WEEKS, OFFICIALS SAID, PRESIDENT CARTER PLANS TO CONFER IN WASHINGTON WITH THE NEXT ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER -- WHO WILL BE CHOSEN FOLLOWING TUESDAY'S ELECTION -- AND THEN THE ADMINISTRATION WILL HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER TO DRAW UP A DETAILED AMERICAN SET OF PROPOSALS OR SUGGESTIONS TO ADVANCE THE NEGOTIATIONS, EITHER AT GENEVA OR ELSEWHERE.

6. THE SUBJECT OF AN AMERICAN "PLAN" IS A SENSITIVE ONE HERE BECAUSE THE ISRAELIS IN PARTICULAR ARE EXTREMELY TOUCHY ABOUT ANY SUGGESTION THAT THE UNITED STATES MIGHT TRY TO IMPOSE A SETTLEMENT ON THEM.

7. AMERICAN PROPOSALS WOULD BE PUT FORTH NEVERTHELESS, OFFICIALS SAID, IF IT LOOKED AS IF A CATALYST WAS NEEDED TO BRIDGE A GAP BETWEEN THE PARTIES THAT APPEARED

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SOLUBLE.

8. IF AS A RESULT OF DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES IN COMING WEEKS, INCLUDING SOVIET-AMERICAN TALKS IN GENEVA THIS WEEK, IT LOOKS AS IF NO AMOUNT OF AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT WILL END THE IMPASSE, THE EFFORT MIGHT BE DROPPED.

9. MOREOVER, AS OFFICIALS POINT OUT, DIFFERENCES AMONG THE ARABS AND BETWEEN THE ARABS AND THE ISRAELIS HAVE SO FAR PREVENTED EVEN THE SOLUTION OF PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS THAT HAVE BLOCKED RECONVENING THE GENEVA CONFERENCE SINCE ITS INITIAL TWO-DAY SESSION IN DECEMBER 1973.

10. IF DETAILED PROPOSALS ARE DRAWN UP -- AND THIS IS NOT A CERTAINTY -- SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS R. VANCE WOULD TAKE THEM TO THE MIDDLE EAST WHEN HE RETURNS THERE SOME TIME IN THE SUMMER, OFFICIALS SAID.

11. OFFICIALS DISTINGUISHED BETWEEN A DETAILED PLAN --

ONE GIVING, FOR EXAMPLE, THE LOCATION OF ISRAELI-ARAB FRONTIERS -- AND MR. CARTER'S ALREADY-STATED IDEAS ABOUT

THE NECESSARY COMPONENTS OF A MIDDLE EAST ACCORD.

12. IN MARCH, MR. CARTER STARTLED ARAB AND ISRAELI OFFICIALS BY DECLARING THAT IN ANY SETTLEMENT HE THOUGHT ISRAEL WOULD HAVE TO RETURN MOST OF THE LAND IT SEIZED FROM EGYPT, SYRIA AND JORDAN IN 1967 BUT WOULD BE ENTITLED TO RECEIVE, IN A PHASED PERIOD OF AS LONG AS EIGHT YEARS, ARAB POLITICAL CONCESSIONS AMOUNTING TO "A REAL PEACE." HE ALSO ENDORSED THE NEED FOR A PALESTINIAN "HOMELAND" BUT LEFT ITS CHARACTER UNDEFINED.

13. THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1969 THAT THE OUTLINE OF AN AMERICAN "PEACE PLAN" HAD BEEN ADVANCED AND IT CAME WITHOUT WARNING.

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14. IN INITIAL DISCUSSIONS WITH MIDDLE EAST LEADERS, THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WAS STRUCK FAVORABLY BY THE FACT THAT EVERYONE SEEMED TO TALK OF PEACE. THE LEADERS IN EGYPT, SYRIA, JORDAN AND SAUDI ARABIA HAVE IMPRESSED THE ADMINISTRATION WITH THEIR DESIRE TO SETTLE WITH ISRAEL EVEN THOUGH THEIR TERMS FOR PEACE ARE FAR APART FROM ISRAEL'S.

15. THE ISRAELIS, TOO, ARE GIVEN CREDIT FOR WANTING FURTHER DIPLOMATIC PROGRESS ALTHOUGH OFFICIALS SAID THEY DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE NEXT ISRAELI GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ANY MORE CONCILIATORY THAN ITS PREDECESSORS ON CRUCIAL ISSUES.

16. ALL PARTIES HAVE LOOKED TO THE UNITED STATES TO TAKE THE DIPLOMATIC LEAD. WHILE THIS ENCOURAGES WASHINGTON IT HAS ALSO CREATED CONCERN THAT IF THE EFFORT COLLAPSES A NEW WAR MIGHT BREAK OUT BECAUSE OF ARAB FRUSTRATION WITH THE UNITED STATES, LEADING TO THE IMPOSITION OF A NEW OIL EMBARGO.

17. THERE ARE FOUR MAJOR ASPECTS TO MAKING PROGRESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, OFFICIALS SAID. ONE DEALS WITH THE PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS, SO FORMIDABLE IN THE PAST THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO RECONVENE THE GENEVA CONFERENCE.

18. THE OTHERS DEAL WITH THE "CORE" ISSUES OF A FINAL SETTLEMENT: THE NATURE OF A FINAL PEACE, THE DIMENSIONS OF THE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL AND THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE.

19. THIS IS WHAT HAS HAPPENED RECENTLY ON THESE FRONTS:

20. PROCEDURES -- THE CRUX OF THE PROBLEM IS STILL PRIMARILY PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION AT A NEW GENEVA CONFERENCE.
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REFERENCE. THE PARTIES INVITED TO THE GENEVA CONFERENCES IN DECEMBER 1973 -- THE ONLY ONE HELD SO FAR -- WERE THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION, THE CO-CHAIRMEN, EGYPT, JORDAN, ISRAEL AND SYRIA. THE SYRIANS DID NOT ATTEND.

21. SINCE THEN THE ARAB STATES HAVE INSISTED THAT THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION BE REPRESENTED AT GENEVA.

22. THE ISRAELIS SAY THAT THEY HAVE THE RIGHT AS AN ORIGINAL PARTICIPANT TO VETO P.L.O. ATTENDANCE, AND THE UNITED STATES AGREES. TO GET AROUND THIS, PRESIDENT ANWAR EL-SADAT OF EGYPT HAS SUGGESTED A JOINT P.L.O.-JORDANIAN DELEGATION. ISRAEL HAS SAID THAT IT WOULD NOT MIND PALESTINIANS FRIENDLY TO KING HUSSEIN BEING INCLUDED IN A JORDANIAN DELEGATION BUT IT OPPOSES A FORMAL P.L.O. TEAM.

23. THE P.L.O. WANTS A FORMAL INVITATION AS A SEPARATE BODY BUT MIGHT AGREE TO ATTEND AS PART OF A PAN-ARAB DELEGATION -- AN IDEA ESPOUSED BY JORDAN AND SYRIA. THE UNITED STATES IS ENCOURAGED THAT ARAB STATES ARE TALKING ABOUT OVERCOMING THE ISSUE, BUT SO FAR THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGNS OF A BREAKTHROUGH.

24. PEACE -- MR. CARTER SAID IN MARCH THAT HE AGREED WITH THE ISRAELIS THAT IN ANY PEACE SETTLEMENT, ISRAEL SHOULD BE GUARANTEED, IN RETURN FOR TERRITORIAL CONCESSIONS, "A REAL PEACE," NOT JUST A TRUCE.

25. IN DISCUSSIONS WITH ARAB LEADERS, AMERICAN OFFICIALS HAVE FOUND EXPECTED UNHAPPINESS WITH THE CARTER CONCEPT.

26. TERRITORY -- AMERICAN OFFICIALS REPORTED THIS WEEK
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THAT THERE HAD NOT BEEN AN IOTA OF PROGRESS ON THIS

CRUCIAL ISSUE.

27. MR. CARTER SAID IN MARCH THAT IN HIS VIEW ISRAEL HAD TO GIVE UP ALL BUT "MINOR" PARTS OF THE LAND TAKEN FROM EGYPT, SYRIA AND JORDAN IN 1967. THE ARABS STILL INSIST ON ALL THE OCCUPIED TERRITORY BEING RETURNED.

28. THE ISRAELIS, WHO FOR DEFENSE REASONS WANT TO KEEP SIGNIFICANT PARTS OF THE WEST BANK OF THE JORDAN RIVER

AND THE GOLAN HEIGHTS, SAY THEY ARE READY FOR A CONFRONTATION WITH THE UNITED STATES IF WASHINGTON INSISTS ON THEIR RETURNING VIRTUALLY ALL OF THE LAND.

29. PALESTINIANS -- MR. CARTER SAID IN MARCH THAT HE BELIEVED THERE HAD TO BE A "HOMELAND" FOR PALESTINIAN REFUGEES, AND THAT THE PALESTINIANS -- MEANING THE P.L.O. -- HAD TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL.

30. IN PRIVATE, THE ARABS ARE NOT UNITED ON THIS QUESTION. THE P.L.O., ALTHOUGH IT FORESEES SOME EVENTUAL COOPERATION WITH JORDAN, WANTS AT A MINIMUM AN INDEPENDENT STATE WITHIN THE WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP, AREAS BOTH CONTROLLED BY ISRAEL.

31. M. SADAT WANTS A TIGHT LINK BETWEEN A PALESTINIAN STATE AND JORDAN EVEN BEFORE SUCH A STATE IS FORMED. JORDAN SEEMS TO PREFER GETTING BACK THE WEST BANK AND THEN ALLOWING A REFERENDUM TO SEE IF THERE IS A REAL DESIRE FOR A P.L.O. PRESENCE. END TEXT. CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, PEACE PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE111892
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: REBUTLER:REB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770173-0687
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770552/aaaabssk.tel
Line Count: 254
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 634cbe92-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN PA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11-Jan-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2501958
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESS MATERIAL
TAGS: SOPN, OVIP, XF, US, NEW YORK TIMES, (VANCE, CYRUS R), (GWERTZMAN, BERNARD)
To: GENEVA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/634cbe92-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009